[
1 IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT				
	FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS			
2	MCALLEN DIVISION			
3	JUANA CRUZ, OFELIA)			
	BENAVIDES, JOSE ELIAS N.G,)			
4	GABRIELA VELAZQUEZ,			
	RICARDO GONZALEZ, HELESIO)			
5	CRUZ, ANGELICA CHAVEZ,)			
	CONCEPCION PEREZ, OLGA)			
6	PEREZ, MAVRIGO SAENZ,)			
	JORGE MAOLEON, HECTOR)			
7	SANCHEZ, HECTOR GONZALEZ,)			
	YESSY PEREZ-MARTINEZ,)			
8	MARIA DE LOURDES CRUZ,)			
	RESENDO LIEVANOS,)			
9	ELIZABETH LARA, LUIS) CIVIL ACTION			
	ALBERTO ZUNIGIA-CASTILLO,) NO. 7:23-CV-00343			
10	MIGUEL CABALLERO SANCHEZ,)			
	GUILLERMO DE LA)			
11	CRUZ-MENDOZA, CARLOS) JURY DEMANDED			
	DANIEL LOPEZ, GILDA RIVAS,)			
12	ARMANDO MORALES DE LLANO,)			
	LAZARO GARCIA, MARIA DE)			
13	JESUS MEDINA, RICARDO)			
	ESQUIVEL, RAFAEL SANCHEZ,)			
14	GUILLERMO RUIZ, ROSA)			
	QUINTANILLA,)			
15) DI PINTERIO			
1,	PLAINTIFFS,)			
16	VS.)			
17	\ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \			
	DELGAR FOODS LLC A/K/A)			
18	DELIA'S TAMALES,)			
)			
19	DEFENDANT.)			
20	, and the state of			
_	***********			
21	ORAL DEPOSITION OF			
22	ELIAS GUTIERREZ			
23	June 28, 2024			
24	***********			
25				
	Page 1			

Veritext Legal Solutions 346-293-7000

EXHIBIT

1 ORAL DEPOSITION of ELIAS GUTIERREZ, produced	1 INDEX
2 as a witness at the instance of the Defendant, and duly	2 PAGE
3 sworn, was taken in the above-styled and numbered cause	3 Appearances
4 on the 28th day of June, 2024, from 9:01 a.m. to	4 Exhibits
5 10:19 a.m. before Anica Diaz, CSR, RPR, CRR, in and for	ELIAS GUTIERREZ
6 the State of Texas, reported by machine shorthand, at	6
7 the Law Offices of Ricardo Gonzalez, 124 South 12th	Examination by Mr. Quezada 05
	7
8 Avenue, Edinburg, Texas, pursuant to the Federal Rules	8 Changes and Signature
9 of Civil Procedure and the provisions stated on the	9 Reporter's Certificate
10 record or attached.	10 11
11	12
12	13 EXHIBITS
13	PAGE
14	14
15	Defendant's Exhibit No. 1
16	15 Questionnaire Filled out by
17	Elias Gutierrez
18	16 17
19	18
20	19
21	20
22	21
23	22
24	23
25	24 25
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1 APPEARANCES	1 PROCEEDINGS
2 COUNSEL FOR THE PLAINTIFFS: 3 MR. RICARDO GONZALEZ	2 (Proceedings began at 9:01 a.m.)
OXFORD & GONZALEZ	THE REPORTER: On the record at 9:01 a.m.
4 124 South 12th Avenue Edinburg, Texas 78539	4 Counsel, would you prefer to have me read
5 Tel: (956) 383-5654	
ric@oxfordandgonzalez.com	5 the script for a Federal Deposition and then introduce
7 COUNSEL FOR DEFENDANT:	6 yourselves, or would you prefer to waive this?
8 MR. STEPHEN J. QUEZADA	7 MR. QUEZADA: We can waive.
OGLETREE, DEAKINS, NASH, SMOAK & STEWART, P.C. 500 Dallas Street, Suite 3000	8 MR. GONZALEZ: We can waive it.
Houston, Texas 77002	9 ELIAS GUTIERREZ,
Tel: (713) 655-5757 stephen.quezada@ogletree.com	10 having been duly sworn, was called as a witness and
11	11 testified through an Interpreter as follows:
MS. LORENA D. VALLE 12 PORTER HEDGES, LLP	12 EXAMINATION
1000 Main Street, 36th Floor	13 BY MR. QUEZADA:
13 Houston, Texas 77002-6341 Tel: (713) 226-6000	14 Q. Good morning, Mr. Gutierrez.
14 lvalle@porterhedges.com	15 A. Good morning.
15 MS. ELIZABETH SANDOVAL CANTU RAMON WORTHINGTON NICOLAS & CANTU, PLLC	16 Q. My name is Stephen Quezada, and I represent
16 1506 South Lone Star Way, Suite 5	17 Delgar Foods, LLC, which does business as Delia's
Edinburg, Texas 78539 17 Tel: (945) 294-4800	18 Tamales. Do you understand that?
ecantu@ramonworthington.com	-
18	
 19 ALSO PRESENT: 20 Mr. Luis Gonzalez, Interpreter 	Q. And today we're here to take your deposition in
Mr. Rosendo Lievanos, Plaintiff	21 the case that you've brought against Delia's.
21 Mr. Luis Zuniga, Plaintiff Ms. Olga Perez, Plaintiff	22 A. Okay.
22	Q. And you understand that when I say "Delia's"
23 24	24 I'm referring to the Defendant in the case, the entity
25	25 that you're suing?
Page 3	Page 5

- 1 A. Okay.
- 2 Q. Can you please state your name for the record.
- 3 A. Jose Elias Navarro Gutierrez.
- 4 Q. Can you tell us any other names you've gone by
- 5 please.
- 6 A. Elias Gutierrez.
- 7 Q. Mr. Gutierrez, have you ever given a deposition
- 8 before?
- 9 A. Not in the United States.
- 10 Q. In any other country?
- 11 A. In Mexico.
- 12 Q. And when did you give a deposition in Mexico?
- 13 A. Like 23 years ago.
- 14 O. And what was that for?
- 15 A. It was daily.
- Q. What was it for? 16
- 17 A. Investigation depositions.
- 18 Q. Okay. Mr. Gutierrez, well, today, we are using
- 19 an interpreter to interpret my questions and your
- 20 answers from English to Spanish and Spanish to English,
- 21 correct?
- 22 A. Okay.
- 23 Q. And we're using the interpreter so that you can
- 24 better understand the questions and in your language,
- 25 correct?

Q. (By Mr. Quezada) And you understand that

- 2 although we are in a conference room --
- 3 MR. QUEZADA: Just for the record, Ms. Olga
- 4 Perez just arrived.
- Q. (By Mr. Quezada) And you understand that 5
- 6 although we're in your attorney's conference room today,
- 7 the testimony you're giving is just as if we were in
- 8 court. Okay?
- 9 A. Okay.
- 10 Q. And you understand that the testimony you're
- 11 giving today is going to be relied upon by the judge and
- 12 the jury to make decisions in this case?
- 13 A. Okay.
- 14 O. And you understand that you're under oath and
- 15 what that means, correct?
- 16 A. Of course.
- 17 Q. Mr. Gutierrez, what did you do to prepare for
- 18 today's deposition?
- 19 A. Nothing.
- 20 Q. You haven't spoken to anyone about your
- 21 deposition?
- 22 A. No.
- 23 Q. You didn't call or text message anyone about
- 24 your deposition?
- 25 A. No.

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- 1 A. Okay.
- Q. And we also have a court reporter here today.
- 3 A. Okay.
- 4 Q. And the interpreter is interpreting everything
- 5 we say, and the court reporter is taking down everything
- 6 we say. And so in order to get the best record today,
- 7 it's very important for us to wait for the other one to
- 8 finish speaking, meaning, let me ask the question, and 9 then I'll let you give the answer before the other one
- 10 starts talking.
- 11 A. Okay.
- 12 Q. If there's any question that I ask you today
- 13 that you don't understand or you want me to clarify,
- 14 just let me know. Okay?
- 15 A. Okay.
- Q. And, similarly, if there is a translation that
- 17 you don't understand or wish to have clarified, let the
- 18 interpreter know so that way he can clarify that for you
- 19 as well. Okay?
- 20 A. Okay.
- Q. If you answer a question today, we'll assume
- 22 that you understood the question and the interpretation;
- 23 is that fair?
- 24 A. Okay.
- 25 (Ms. Olga Perez enters conference room.)

- Q. Okay. And the other thing I forgot to mention 2 is because we have a court reporter here today, she can
- 3 only record verbal responses. Okay?
- 4 A. Okay.
- 5 Q. So the normal uh-huh, nuh-uh, we -- they just
- 6 don't work today. Okay?
- A. Agreement.
- 8 Q. Did you review any documents in preparation for
- 9 today?
- 10 A. No.
- 11 Q. What is your address?
- 12 A. Right here.
- 13 MR. QUEZADA: Okay. Mr. Gutierrez handed
- 14 me a business card that says Circle T Family Community,
- 15 and the address is 1820 Clay Tolle, T-O-L-L-E, Street,
- 16 Mission, Texas 78572.
- 17 A. (In English) Number 166.
- 18 Q. Number 166.
- 19 And for how long have you lived at
- 20 1820 Clay Tolle?
- 21 A. That question, can you repeat it?
- 22 Q. Yes, sir. For about how long have you lived at
- 23 1820 Clay Tolle?
- 24 A. Okay. About a year.
- 25 Q. And before that, where did you live?

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Page 7

- 1 A. In McAllen. The address is Idela 2024.
- 2 Q. And was that a house or an apartment?
- 3 A. House.
- 4 Q. And for about how long did you live there?
- 5 A. Four years.
- Q. Okay. And who lives with you at the house on
- 7 Clay Tolle, or the -- the, I believe, RV in -- on Clay
- 8 Tolle -- let me ask it this way: Who lives with you at
- 9 the Clay Tolle address?
- 10 A. My wife.
- 11 Q. And what is your phone number?
- 12 A. I don't know it.
- 13 Q. Do you have a cell phone?
- 14 A. Yes.
- 15 Q. Do you know who the service provider is?
- 16 A. T-Mobile.
- 17 Q. And is the phone in your name?
- 18 A. No.
- 19 Q. In whose name is it?
- 20 A. My daughter.
- 21 Q. And what is her name?
- 22 A. Tanya Navarro.
- 23 Q. Can you spell Tanya for us please?
- 24 A. T-A-N-Y-A.
- 25 Q. And how old is Tanya?

Q. Sir, do you understand that the reason for your

- 2 separation was because the Government notified Delia's
- 3 that it could no longer continue employing you?
- 4 MR. GONZALEZ: Objection to the form.
- A. Blanca notified me. You were there. I was
- 6 never showed a document of why. I was told verbally and
- 7 then Blanca told me I could take other documents and
- 8 continue working.
- 9 MR. QUEZADA: Objection; nonresponsive.
- 10 Q. (By Mr. Quezada) My question is just about
- 11 whether you understood that the Government notified
- 12 Delia's that it could no longer continue employing you.
- 13 If you know that, that's my question.
- 14 A. Yes.
- Q. Okay. And what's your date of birth? 15
- 16 A. 11/30/70.
- 17 Q. And you worked at Delia's as a cook; is that
- 18 right?
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. And your dates of employment were
- 21 February 26th, 2019 until May 2nd, 2023?
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. And your hourly pay rate was \$9.50?
- 24 A. Yes, but then my salary was increased.
- 25 Q. Okay.

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- 1 A. 31 years old.
- Q. And for how long have you had this phone with
- 3 T-Mobile?
- 4 A. Like two years and a half.
- Q. And has that whole -- has the phone been with 5
- 6 T-Mobile that whole time?
- A. No, not always. I've had other phones.
- Q. Oh, okay. But the one -- the one you've got
- 9 today, has that one always been with T-Mobile?
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. And have you had that same device for the two
- 12 and a half years?
- 13 A. Yes.
- Q. Have you ever been a party in another lawsuit?
- 15
- Q. What is the reason that you're suing Delia's, 16
- 17 sir?
- A. Well, I was fired unjustified -- in an 18
- 19 unjustified manner, and there were 300 other people that
- 20 were still working there.
- Q. So the only reason you're suing Delia's is
- 22 about the termination of your employment?
- 23 A. Okay, yes.
- 24 Q. Yes?
- 25 A. Yes, I was fired.

2 clarify, rather, that when he's using the term "sweldo"

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- MR. QUEZADA: And I just want to note -- or
- 3 or salary, we're talking about an hourly rate. So I
- 4 just want to ask a question to clarify that.
- Q. (By Mr. Quezada) When you said that your
- 6 "sweldo" increased, you mean your hourly rate increased?
- 7 A. I was paid \$9.50 per hour.
- Q. And then that hourly rate increased?
- 9 A. Yes.
- 10 Q. And then when you worked more than 40 hours in
- 11 a workweek, you got time and a half that rate, correct?
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 Q. And so while you were working for Delia's, it
- 14 had a time keeping system, correct?
- 15 A. Yes.
- Q. And that time keeping system required you to
- 17 punch in and punch out using your fingerprint?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. And at the time you were working for Delia's,
- 20 you understood that you were required to accurately and
- 21 correctly punch in and out and record your time,
- 22 correct?
- 23 A. Yes.
- Q. And while you were working for Delia's, you
- 25 followed that policy, correct?

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Page 11

1	A. Yes.	1	A. Uh-huh.
2	Q. And you worked at, I believe, two locations for	2	Q. Is that a yes?
3	Delia's?	3	,
4	A. Yes.	4	Jan Jr
5	Q. How many locations? Two?	5	1
6	A. Yes.	6	Q. Do you know whose idea it was to sue Delia's?
7	Q. And at both locations you followed that policy	7	A. No.
8	and practice of clocking in and out correctly?	8	Q. Can you describe for us your duties that you
9	A. Yes.	9	did as a cook?
10	Q. When you were paid it was on a weekly basis, is	10	A. May I mention them all?
11	that correct?	11	Q. Sure. Or I can I can walk you through I
12	A. Yes.	12	think what they were.
13	Q. And you received a weekly pay stub?	13	A. Everything referring to the kitchen.
14	A. Yes.	14	Q. Okay. Cleaning the kitchen?
15	Q. And when you received those pay stubs, would	15	A. Yes.
16	you review them?	16	Q. Would you wash, peel, and cut vegetables?
17	A. Sometimes.	17	A. Yes.
18	Q. So you had the opportunity to check to make	18	Q. And meats, if needed?
19	sure that they were accurate; is that fair?	19	A. Not meats.
20	A. Yes.	20	Q. You'd mix ingredients?
21	Q. And while working for Delia's, you never	21	A. No.
22	reported that a check was not accurate; is that correct?	22	Q. Food handling was part of your duties?
23	A. No.	23	A. Yes.
24	Q. No, you did not? Or, no, that's not, correct?	24	Q. Cook the actual food products?
25	A. I never reported a check.	25	A. Yes.
	Page 14		Page 16
1	Q. And the locations you worked at were McAllen	1	Q. Wrap up the finished cooked products?
2	north and Mission; is that right?	2	A. Yes.
3	A. Yes.	3	Q. Put them on trays to put them out for sale?
4	Q. Okay. What's the highest level of education	4	A. Yes, that too.
5	that you've completed?	5	Q. Wash trays?
6	A. Excuse me?	6	A. Yes.
7	Q. What's the highest level of education that you	7	Q. Wash and clean cooking equipment?
8	completed?	8	A. Yes.
9	A. My first two years of college.	9	Q. Sanitize the cooking areas?
10	Q. And that was in Mexico?	10	A. Yes.
11	A. Yes.	11	Q. Cleaning the floors?
12	Q. What were you studying?	12	
13	A. I was studying to be an attorney.	13	Q. Help maintain the cooking area to health code
14	Q. How did you learn about the lawsuit against	14	standards?
15	Delia's?	15	A. Yes.
16	A. My colleagues.	16	Q. Remove items that were not needed, throw away
17	Q. Anyone did anyone specific tell you about	17	stuff that y'all were done with?
18	it?	18	-
19	A. Mauricio, but I don't remember his last name.	19	Q. Comply with the safety and health standard
20	Q. And how did Mauricio tell you about the		rules for keeping the food safe?
	lawsuit?	21	A. Yes.
22	A. That there was a current lawsuit for	22	
23 unjustified termination.			Delia's?
24	Q. And is that your understanding of why everyone	24	
	is suing Delia's?	25	
	Page 15		Page 17

- 1 A. My direct supervisor, McAllen north was Dulce
- 2 Palacios and Cassandra Pena.
- 3 Q. That was Dulce Palacios?
- 4 A. Dulce Palacios.
- 5 Q. Did you have any other supervisors?
- 6 A. Yes
- 7 Q. Okay. Were those the only two immediate?
- 8 A. Yes. They're the managers.
- 9 Q. Did you have a kitchen lead or a team lead that
- 10 you reported to?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 O. And who was that?
- 13 A. Juana Perez. The other name is Rosario, and I
- 14 don't quite remember the rest.
- 15 Q. And the direct supervisors that you just
- 16 provided for us, I believe you said that was at the
- 17 McAllen location?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. Did you have different people you reported to
- 20 at the other location in Mission?
- 21 A. Yes.
- Q. And who were they?
- 23 A. Rosendo. And I don't remember the name of the
- 24 other person.
- Q. And that's Rosendo Lievanos who's here with us

- 1 Q. There was never a time where you asked Delia's
- 2 to change the amount of a paycheck or the amount of time
- 3 on a paycheck; is that correct?
- 4 A. No.
- 5 Q. No, you did not?
- 6 A. No.
- 7 Q. Did your job duties change over time or remain
- 8 the same?
- 9 A. They changed over time.
- 10 Q. And how did they change?
- 11 A. A little more strict with us.
- 12 Q. But what about your duties, did the duties
- 13 change?
- 14 A. No. Those were the same.
- 15 Q. Were you provided any instruction on how to use
- 16 the time keeping system?
- 17 A. Yes.
- Q. And who provided you that instruction?
- A. My supervisor.
- Q. And what was your supervisor's name who
- 21 provided the training?
- A. Rogelio Castorena.
- Q. And the training he provided you was sufficient
- 24 for you to understand how to clock in and clock out,
- 25 correct?

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- 1 today?
- 2 A. Yeah.
- 3 Q. Yeah. Did you have team leads or kitchen leads
- 4 in Mission?
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. And who were they?
- 7 A. Mauricio and Jose Jimenez.
- 8 Q. The duties that we described earlier, you
- 9 recall those?
- A. Of course.
- Q. All that work you did during the workday,
- 12 correct?
- 13 A. Yes.
- Q. And you do that work between the time you
- 15 punched in and the time you punched out, correct?
- A. Yes.
- 17 Q. What was it specifically that you were cooking?
- 18 A. Tamales.
- 19 Q. Anything else?
- 20 A. Menudo.
- 21 Q. Anything else?
- A. Green sauce and red sauce.
- Q. Other than a cook, did you hold any other
- 24 positions with Delia's?
- A. No, just cook.

- 1 A. Yes.
- Q. And that was the Focus system, correct, the
- 3 time keeping system was the Focus system?
- A. Yes.
- 5 Q. Do you have any calendars or logs or notes that
- 6 reflect any record of time worked by you for Delia's?
- A. Just the computer.
- 8 Q. And that's the time keeping system at Delia's,
- 9 right?
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. So that time keeping system is the best record
- 12 of hours worked by you at Delia's, right?
- 13 A. I think so.
- 14 Q. Were you on the morning shift, or the afternoon
- 15 shift, or did you rotate between both of them?
- 16 A. I would change.
- 17 Q. Okay. Did you have any particular cadence of
- 18 how you would change?
- 19 A. No. It was all the same. Morning and
- 20 afternoon.
- Q. Your schedule, did you set your own schedule or
- 22 were you told when you needed to work?
- A. We had a scheduler.
- Q. You had a schedule or a scheduler?
- 25 A. They made the schedule.

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	1
1 I, ELIAS GUTIERREZ, have read the foregoing	the witness;
2 deposition and hereby affix my signature that same is	1 I further certify that pursuant to FRCP Rule
3 true and correct, except as noted above.	30(f)(1) that the signature of the deponent:
4	X_ was requested by the deponent or a party
5	before the completion of the deposition and that the signature is to be before any notary public and returned
6	within 30 days from date of receipt of the transcript. If returned, the attached Changes and Signature Page
7 ELIAS GUTIERREZ	5 contains any changes and the reasons therefor;
8 THE STATE OF TEXAS)	6 was not requested by the deponent or a party before the completion of the deposition.
9 COUNTY OF)	7
10 Before me,, on	I further certify that I am neither counsel 8 for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties or
11 this day personally appeared ELIAS GUTIERREZ, known to	attorney in the action in which this proceeding was 9 taken, and further that I am not financially or
12 me (or proved to me under oath or through	otherwise interested in the outcome of the action.
13) (description of identity card or	Certified to by me this 10th day of July, 2024.
14 other document) to be the person whose name is	11
15 subscribed to the foregoing instrument and acknowledged	12 13
16 to me that they executed the same for the purposes and	14 15 Juny Day
17 consideration therein expressed.	Autica Diaz, Teras Com(00/21), RPR, CRR
Given under my hand and seal of office this	16 Expiration Date: 08-31-24 Veritext Legal Solutions
19 day of, 2024.	17 Firm Registration No. 571
20	300 Throckmorton Street, Suite 1600 18 Fort Worth, Texas 76102
21 Natura Public in and for	19 20
22 Notary Public in and for 23 The State of Texas	21
23 The State of Texas 24	22 23
25	24 25
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FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS MCALLEN DIVISION JUANA CRUZ, OFELIA) BENAVIDES, JOSE ELIAS N.G,) GABRIELA VELAZQUEZ, RICARDO) GONZALEZ, HELESIO CRUZ,) ANGELICA CHAVEZ, CONCEPCION) PEREZ, OLGA PEREZ, MAVRIGO) SAENZ, JORGE MAOLEON,) HECTOR SANCHEZ, HECTOR) GONZALEZ, YESSY) PEREZ-MARTINEZ, MARIA DE) LOURDES CRUZ, RESENDO) LIEVANOS, ELIZABETH LARA,) LUIS ALBERTO) CIVIL ACTION ZUNIGIA-CASTILLO, MIGUEL) NO. 7:23-CV-00343 CABALLERO SANCHEZ,) GUILLERMO DE LA) CABALLERO SANCHEZ,) GUILLERMO DE LA) COPEZ, GILDA RIVAS, ARMANDO) MORALES DE LLANO, LAZARO) GARCIA, MARIA DE JESUS) MEDINA, RICARDO ESQUIVEL,) RAFAEL SANCHEZ, GUILLERMO) RAFAEL SANCHEZ, GUILLERMO) PLAINTIFFS,) DELIA'S TAMALES,) DEFENDANT.) DELGAR FOODS LLC A/K/A) DELIA'S TAMALES,) TO REPORTER'S CERTIFICATION DEPOSITION OF ELIAS GUTIERREZ J June 28, 2024 J, Anica Diaz, Certified Shorthand Reporter in and for the State of Texas, hereby certify to the John Candidate of Texas, hereby certify to the	1 Ricardo GOnzalez - ric@oxfordandgonzalez.com 2 July 10, 2024 3 RE: Cruz, Juana, Et Al v. Delgar Foods LLC, Et Al. 4 DEPOSITION OF: Elias Gutierrez (# 6734289) 5 The above-referenced witness transcript is 6 available for read and sign. 7 Within the applicable timeframe, the witness 8 should read the testimony to verify its accuracy. If 9 there are any changes, the witness should note those 10 on the attached Errata Sheet. 11 The witness should sign and notarize the 12 attached Errata pages and return to Veritext at 13 errata-tx@veritext.com. 14 According to applicable rules or agreements, if 15 the witness fails to do so within the time allotted, 16 a certified copy of the transcript may be used as if 17 signed. 18 Yours, 19 Veritext Legal Solutions 20 21 22 23 24
sworn by the officer and that the transcript of the oral 25 deposition is a true record of the testimony given by	25
Page 43	Page 45